

Our Reference North East and North Cumbria ICB\
FOI ICB 24-144

NECS – John Snow House
Durham University Science Park
Durham
DH1 3YG

Tel: 0191 301 1300
E-mail: necsu.icbfoi@nhs.net

By Email

23 July 2024

Dear Applicant

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information – NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)

Thank you for your request received by North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) on 3 July 2024 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (the ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Gateshead, Newcastle, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley (which covers the five local authorities of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees).

We have dealt with your request in accordance with your “right to know” under section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (subsequently referred to as FOIA2000) which entitles you to be provided with information “held” by a public authority unless an appropriate exemption applies.

Your Request

I ask that the ICB provides the following information:

1. Confirm who is the 'ICB CHAIR', that the North East Ambulance Service has said is 'advocating' for the families, due to their disengagement from the IOG monthly meetings.
2. Did the families agree with the appointment of the 'ICB CHAIR' to act as their 'advocate' in the IOG meetings?
3. Please confirm the reason (s) for the families disengagement from the monthly IOG meetings?
4. Please provide any reports or documents, including emails and contemporaneous notes, made by the 'ICB Chair' in their role as 'advocate' for the families within the IOG monthly meetings?

For reference:

In 2022 the ICB and NHS England instigated placing the North East Ambulance Service into a quality improvement process, with the ICB having ongoing oversight.

This after NHS England and the CQC commenced reviews and inspections after concerns were raised by staff blowing the whistle on malpractice at the said ambulance service.

As part of the recommendations by the review commissioned by NHS England and chaired by Marianne Griffiths, it was agreed that an oversight group should be formed.

The chair of the oversight group was/ is Graham Prestwich, who is due to publish a report according to the recent published minutes from a Board meeting held by the North East Ambulance Service.

In other North East Ambulance Service board papers, the ambulance service has confirmed that the ICB had been commissioned, to provide an independent review of the actions arising from both the CQC inspection and the NHSE commissioned review, which was chaired by Dame Marianne Griffiths.

The North East Ambulance Service has described the role of the ICB chair as an advocate for the families who lost loved ones, as NEAS have now withdrawn from the process.

Our Response

1. The chair of ICB is Professor Sir Liam Donaldson
2. The ICB do not hold information as to whether families agreed with the appointment of Professor Sir Liam Donaldson to act as their advocate in IOG meetings, but one of the main roles of ICB chairs is to ensure that the views of patients and service users are taken into account in the commissioning of local health and care services.
3. Please refer to response to question 2
4. Please refer to response to question 2

In accordance with our duty under s.16 of the FOIA to provide reasonable advice and assistance to an individual requesting information, the FOI email address for NEAS is publicrelations@neas.nhs.uk

In accordance with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the NHS ICB website <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/>.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to request a review of our decision, you should write to the Senior Governance Manager using the contact details at the top of this letter quoting the appropriate reference number.

If you are not content with the outcome your review, you do have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the North of England Commissioning Support Unit.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

www.ico.org.uk

Any information we provide following your request under the Freedom of Information Act will not confer an automatic right for you to re-use that information, for example to publish it. If you wish to re-use the information that we provide and you do not specify this in your initial application for information then you must make a further request for its re-use as per the Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 www.legislation.gov.uk . This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours sincerely

S Davies

S Davies
Information Governance Officer